

Diversity Affairs Commission
Thursday, July 15, 2021 • 3:00pm
Zoom Virtual Meeting

Introductions (Name & Agency) of those in attendance: Steve Binder Winnebago County Board Supervisor District 13, Mike Norton Winnebago County Board Supervisor District 20, Beth Roberts Winnebago County Human Services, Heidi Keating Winnebago County Health Department, Bryn Ceman Human Services ADRC, Lateria Garrett Oshkosh Resident, Sarah Clarke World Relief, Sara Muhlbauer CEO Lakeland Care, Mary Siebert Child Care Director at Neenah/Menasha YMCA, Mandi Dornfeld University of Wisconsin Extension, Jody Bezio University of Wisconsin Extension.

Agenda Items

Update on Steering Committee: Dornfeld worked with Executive Doemel to put forth last for the Steering Committee for final approval, after approval will work to transition responsibilities to steering committee.

Looking for Educational Topic or Presenter Ideas (Roberts). Looking for suggestions from the group.

- Mee Yang, Hmong Culture – Beth will follow up
- Don Thibideau? Technical College in northern part of state/east part of MN, Native American history expert
- Menominee Tribe in Oshkosh - Muhlbauer has some connections and is willing to reach out.
- One of newer Oshkosh City Council Members is vocal about stopping conversion therapy - he might be able to hook us up with resources in the LGBTQ community (Roberts)
- Appleton Pride Event (Roberts)
- Siebert - Celebrate Diversity Group
- African Heritage Inc out of Appleton - Garrett - might be available in September...They want to know specifically what we would like them to speak to? Beth suggests something on celebrating some of the heritage that's unique to black community.
- Dornfeld- could we come up with a "standard" ask that we could use with all speakers?
 - What is our goal - what do we want out of the education we are seeking?
 - Maybe this could be task of steering committee...set educational goals that could be used as requests/talking points when inviting guest presenters.
- Oshkosh Food Coop - learn about their efforts to reach out to different racial and ethnic groups. Learn about what they're doing to create a more inclusive co-op.
- Menasha Library - Hispanic/Latino Liaison on staff.
- Muslim Group - Supervisor Norton will look for contact information. They have given presentations in past and are very interesting to listen to/learn from.
- Oshkosh Corporation's Diversity Coordinator
 - What other companies have Diversity Coordinators or similar positions? KC?
 - Invite these types of positions to regularly participate in monthly meetings to give input and information – help to assess needs and opportunities in community. (suggestion made to wait to make this kind of invite until initial development of commission is complete.

Commission Status Report

Mandi gave a summary of what has been accomplished since the resolution to start a Diversity Affairs Commission was approved by the County Board in December 2020.

- Established monthly meeting (1st Thursday)
- Waking Up White Event 30 participants, with favorable results (survey results shared at previous mtng)
- Created system for housing minutes, agendas, etc,
- Navigated a complex and changing system due to COVID...are working closely with County Clerk, Executive office, corporate counsel to follow best practices. Changing world and systems will continue to impact county businesses and groups
- Mission & By-laws are in draft form
- Accomplished this with no budget
- Looking ahead – next steps
 - Start Steering committee meetings (this will be leadership group for the commission)
 - Election of leadership within steering committee
 - Establish schedule of Public Meetings
 - Decide on best meeting/event format (in-person, virtual or hybrid) for maximum reach, participation and within technological abilities of county.
 - Maintain current structure of meaningful public engagement to inform the commission

Strategic Plan - Heidi Keating

- Reviewed what strategic planning is and process for completing a plan
 - We are really at beginning of process and it does take time.
- Two drafts of mission statement have been developed so far...
 - Evaluation - is it easy to understand by a broad audience? Can everyone understand who we are and what we're doing?
 - Proposal: "Winnebago County's Diversity Affairs Commission embraces diversity, inclusion, and belonging by bringing the community together to listen to one another, learn together, and encourage our community to act in ways that help people thrive"
 - Mission references "action" in addition to education...but does not state what the specific actions are to allow for growth.
 - Steering committee will adopt or change this mission statement when they begin to meet.

Goal Setting - What do you hope the commission will work on?

- Suggestion: Look through current resolutions that county has around diversity, equity and inclusion and educate and align ourselves with what is already in existence. Good exercise for steering committee to get their arms around what already exists.
- Binder: Hook up Seniors with youth who are struggling in school. If you don't have a highschool diploma you can't get a good job. Help repair education gap that occurred during COVID. Seniors are looking for things to do, and kids need support.
 - Dornfeld – Do we know graduation rates for minority populations in our County? No – will need to look this information up.
- Norton: We need to start by looking internally - look at Winnebago County Government - look at how diverse/inclusive we are there. Compare to diversity/make-up of rest of community
- Roberts: Align ethnicities of employees to ethnic make-up of general community.
- Roberts: Would like to see Health Care disparities become smaller. I don't see us fixing that - but could have integral part of partnering with others who are addressing these issues.
- Norton: Racism is a health issue. Some other counties have passed resolutions declaring this. Roberts: There is an existing resolution written on Racism being a public health crisis - counties can just sign on to it without having to write something new.
- Binder: Homelessness...educate public that no one wants to be homeless, that they're people having problems and they're trying to work on them. Help public have more empathy/compassion for homelessness.
 - Dornfeld - could be framework for multiple topics we're trying to work on - increasing understanding and empathy. Amplification of Data. Sharing Story.
- Garrett – Also focus on education/informing and bringing people together so our diversity doesn't LEAVE. People come and go - because they don't feel valued/appreciated. Can't picture themselves having careers and families here in our community. Diverse community at UWO - they come to get a great education, but then leave as they can't see themselves in our community.
- Norton: How to reach out - how do we let people know who/where to reach out? How do we let diverse people know that they can come to this committee with concerns/problems they are experiencing. Feel comfortable talking to us - maybe we could be go-between to help them.
- Siebert: How will we do marketing and communication of the commission overall?...we haven't talked about this and this could be a goal for how we get word out about this group.

By-laws

Any additional input for current by-laws before they go to the Steering Committee for approval? None.

Resource Sharing:

- Common Ground - Understanding Whiteness, a dialogue oncommunity conversion (online) Foxcities.org July 29 7-8:30pm Commongroundfoxcities.org
- Race Forward - a webinar available almost every week Raceforward.org - lots and lots of opportunities available here.
- Definitions by the Gemini Group (Equity Terms). Gives us some shared language to use with each other. (Read description) 4:05pm Can we share this? Roberts will send to Dornfeld to share with group.
- Winnebago YouTube video to put our meetings on? County would have to set this up...how do we go about that? Collect resources and our meeting videos. Norton will look into this...

Final Comments:

Norton: we've accomplished a lot - it has taken other groups a year or more to get as far as we are in 6 months. Meeting was adjourned at 4:10pm.

Respectfully submitted by: Jody Bezio, Administrative Associate Winnebago County Extension